



COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONS
COMPLEMENTARY TO MEDICINE

Benchmarking document

Orthoptics

The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine is issuing this Benchmarking Document for Orthoptics in the performance of its functions as defined by Article 27 of the Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and in terms of Article 28 Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and Subsidiary Legislation 454.16 Professions Complimentary to Medicine (Licence to Practice) Regulations.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Description and Scope of Practice	2
Occupational Description.....	2
Scope of Practice.....	3
Level of Qualification	3
Language Proficiency	4
Minimum Curriculum Requirements	5
Practice and Training	6
ANNEXE A	8
Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine	8

Introduction

This document outlines Malta's Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine (CPCM) standards of proficiency for Orthoptists. Via this document the CPCM is setting the minimum registration requirements for Orthoptists in Malta. These standards are the threshold standards considered necessary to protect members of the public and via which qualified Orthoptists are able to apply for registration in the Orthoptics register kept by the CPCM.

This benchmarking document has been adopted by the CPCM to evaluate and assess applications to be registered as Orthoptists and practise within the jurisdiction of Malta. They also serve as guidance to the CPCM on how to address substantive differences from these standards.

Description and Scope of Practice

Occupational Description

Orthoptics is a profession within the field of health, which concentrates on the examination, diagnosis and treatment of ocular motility problems and problems related to amblyopia, defective binocular vision, abnormal eye movements arising from injury or disease affecting the eye muscles or the nerve supplying the muscles and diplopia as a result of the abnormal eye movements.

Scope of Practice

Registered Orthoptists hold a recognised BSc degree in Orthoptics. The profession of Orthoptics includes services and care involved in:

- The determination and evaluation of the refractive status of the eye and other physiological attributes and functions subserving vision.
- The examination of eye movements and the recognition of ocular motility problems.
- The examination and interpretation of visual fields tests.
- The selection, design, provision and adaptation of low vision aids.
- The preservation, maintenance, protection, improvement and enhancement of visual performance.

Level of Qualification

The CPCM considers applications from applicants who have successfully completed a BSc degree in Orthoptics with a total of 180 ECTS credits at an MQF/EQF (Malta/European Qualification Framework) level of 6 or higher at an Institution recognised by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the National Commission for Further and Higher Education in Malta (NCFHE).

The CPCM understands that a number of programmes may be at, or above, the standard outlined, and that there may be some exceptions, so applications will be taken on a case by case basis to verify that the standard requirements as outlined by this document are met.

Courses delivered online are not accepted.

The applicant needs to:

- Provide a detailed transcript of Theoretical and Practical Training and Studies in hours associated with the Orthoptics Qualification and in relation with the syllabus performed by the accredited institution. This has to be endorsed in the original format by the Institution's Head/Registrar of the University/College.
- Provide the course description, including study unit details.

Language Proficiency

The CPCM requires those applicants who wish to enter the Orthoptics register, to provide proof of language proficiency as defined in Annex A.

Evaluation of Application

On evaluation of the application the Council may choose to do one of the following:

- Grant registration;
- Ask for further clarification when required;
- Ask for the applicant to attend an interview;
- Reject the application if the qualification is not adequate and in line with this benchmark; and
- Be asked to carry out a period of supervised practice or undergo an aptitude test.

Minimum Curriculum Requirements

This standard ensures that the curriculum meets the standards for professional knowledge, skills and attitudes as expected by CPCM and therefore the applicant would be considered fit to practise in Malta.

The CPCM is aware that standards are continuously being updated over time. This document refers to the minimum general subject areas (but not restricted to) that the course needs to offer for the applicant to be successfully considered as a Registered Orthoptist. The course programme successfully completed will reflect the skills and knowledge base that ensure that an applicant, once registered, is able to work as an independent and autonomous practitioner.

The applicant must be registered with the national regulator in the country of origin (if the profession is regulated in that country) and should have practiced the profession of Orthoptics for a minimum of 6 months in the past 1 year.

The core modules expected to be covered in the course of studies are:

- General Human Anatomy and Physiology
- Ocular Anatomy and Physiology
- Basic principles of Orthoptics and Binocular vision
- Basic Optics (including refraction)
- Clinical skills and theoretical approach in Orthoptics
- Physiology of vision and perception
- General pathology and eye disease
- Ocular motility and related abnormalities
- General ocular pharmacology, therapeutics and prescribing
- Medical Microbiology
- Electrodiagnostics
- Paediatric Ophthalmology
- Neuro-ophthalmology
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Research studies

Practice and Training

Applicants seeking registration will be required to submit documentary evidence of the supervised/mentored training in the form of either a student portfolio or a logbook duly signed by the supervisor. These will include the practical sessions undertaken showing the key defined learning objectives. The clinical supervised training is expected to be of a minimum of 1,000 hours.

For those carrying out the training after graduation, the mentioned practice has to be carried out under the direct supervision of a CPCM registered and licensed Orthoptist with a minimum of 5 years work experience and the logbook duly signed. Hours of practice included as part of Research Projects will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Other CPCM documents to be considered in conjunction with this Benchmarking Document:

1. Codes of Professional and Ethical Conduct

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/regcounc/cpcm/Documents/Codes%20of%20Professional%20and%20Ethical%20Conduct%20-%20March%202019.pdf>

2. Code of Practice (Dental Technology)

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/regcounc/cpcm/Documents/Dental%20Technology%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>

ANNEXE A

Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine

The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine requires applicants to meet the Council's level of Proficiency in the English or the Maltese Language.

All professionals seeking registration are requested to present either one of the following:

1. A Maltese language certificate; **OR**
 - (i) An Ordinary Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 3); OR
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
 - (ii) An Advanced/Intermediate Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 4); OR
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
 - (iii) A Medical Maltese Proficiency Certificate.
<https://www.um.edu.mt/arts/malti/korsijiet/medicalmaltesecourse>
2. The applicant can provide evidence that his/her professional qualification(s) (on the basis of which he/she is applying for registration) was/were acquired through the medium of English or Maltese and that practice placements in that/those qualification(s) were undertaken and supervised through the medium of English or Maltese; **OR**

3. The applicant can provide evidence that s/he has **lived in and practised** his/her profession through the medium of English or Maltese in a country that has English or Maltese recognised as the official language of that country for a period of **not less than 2 years in the past five-year period; OR**
4. Any other proof of English or Maltese language Proficiency.

Additionally, should the applicant choose to opt for other forms of proving language proficiency, the applicant can opt for either one of the following Secure English Language Tests.

Should the applicant opt for this, the below is the list of Examining Boards recognized by the Council and the minimum required standards accepted by the Council in terms of the table below (or equivalent);

Examining Board	TOEFL Internet-Based (iBT)	IELTS (Academic)	Cambridge	Occupational English Test (OET)
Required Level	95	6.5	Advanced Certificate	B
Remarks	A writing score of at least 24 is required.	Required with a minimum of 6.0 in all elements.	A pass at a grade C or better is required.	A grade B or better is required in all components.

Any other Secure English Language Tests which are equivalent to those mentioned in the table above will also be considered.